दोनों पत्रिकाओं के संपादक के पद जो इस समय रिक्त हैं, जब तक नहीं भरे जाते तब तक संपादक मंडलों के विचार विमर्श में सहायता देने के लिये सहायक संपादक (भगीरथ पत्रिका) तथा सहायक निदेशक (प्रचार) क्रमशः भगीरथ (हिन्दी) और भगीरथ (अंग्रेजी) के संपादक मंडलों की बैठकों में भाग लेंगे ।

Scab-resistant varieties of apple

2466. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there have been conflicting claims and contests over development of scab-resistant apple varieties by Scientists as reported in 'Times of India' of 6th October, 1986, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also correct that there have been several contests claims regarding coconut will disease and break through in pulse varieties over the last four years and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether similar contested claims by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Scientists were earlier looked into by any high powered committees, if so, the steps taken and reasons for such continued unsubstantiated claims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) According to the press report of Times of India dated 12-8-86, the Vice-Chancellor of the Y.S. Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry, Solan is quoted as saying that the University Researchers have been able to achieve a breakthrough in evolving four hybrid apple varieties which are also resistant to the dreaded scab disease. This claim has been contested by Dr. K. D. Farooqui of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology in Times of India dated 6th October, 1986. According to Dr. Farooqui, the Himachal hybrids whch have been evolved by crossing with Ambri Kashmir variety are not resistant to scab. Enquiries from the concerned sicentists of Dr. Y. S. Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry, Solan have revealed that four newy deveoped varieties of apple were not bred for scab resistance, but were tested for their reaction to scab under field conditions in 'hot spots' and also by artificial inoculation. These varieties have reamined free from scab in 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1984, 1985 & 1986. However, in 1982 and 1983 under severe epiphytic condition (extremely wet weather), these varieties did show development of scab lesions on the foilage. Based on infection rating all the four apple hybrids were observed to possess high tolerance to scab in comparison to standard varieties.

(b) The casual agent of the coconut root wilt disease has not been conclusively established. The past work has indicated the possibilities of association of fungi, bacteria, namatode, viruses and more recently Myoplasma like Organism(s) MLOs which in some respect resemble the viruses. Since viruses and MLOs are obligate parasitic organisms, it is not possible to culture and conduct pathogenicity test conclusively. This is the main reason why the final identity of the causal agent has remained unsettled. There is no conflict otherwise.

In the last 5 years, 26 new varieties of pulses have been developed which exhibit high yielding ability along with tolerance to one or more major diseases.

(c) Except for the ICAR Inquiry Committee Report in 1973 under the Chairmanship of Shri P. B. Gajendragadkar, Retired Chief Justice of India, we are not aware any such contested claims nor about the formation of a high powered committee of the ICAR/CSIR.